



January 24, 2019

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Knopp, members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 479, which would require public employers to adopt policies to prevent workplace harassment.

SEIU Local 503 represents over 72,000 people, including over 22,000 state workers who would be impacted by SB 479. SEIU 503 members are DHS workers who provide direct services to over one million Oregonians each year, ODOT workers who put in the long hours to ensure safe roads and infrastructure, Parks workers who keep our state parks beautiful and accessible, and much more.

SEIU 503 has committed to be a leader in the ongoing conversation around workplace harassment. Our union has identified our Safe Workplace Initiative - which protects the rights and dignity of all workers - as a priority for our work in the legislature this year.

Our members have also done work to outline important elements of any workplace harassment policy, including:

"How to complain of harassment; such that transparent and accountable reporting structures of observed harassment are communicated frequently to employees, in a variety of forms and methods."

"Anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies should include how employers should be alert for any possibility of retaliation against an employee who reports harassment, and what steps and actions should be taken to ensure that such retaliation does not occur."

Some of this work has been guided by an internal survey that we did of our membership in early 2018. Of the 1,106 state workers who took the survey, 232 reported experiencing unwanted sexual attention in the workplace, and 260 reported working with someone who had experienced sexual assault. These results, while only a sample of the workers we represent, make a strong case for the need for proactive reforms like SB 479.

We are encouraged to see this bill brought forward and look forward to participating in the process to craft policies that prevent workplace harassment that embody our share values.

Thank you,

Courtney Graham
Political Strategist
SEIU Local 503

SERVICE EMPLOYEE
INTERNATIONAL UNION
LOCAL 503

PO Box 1215
Salem, OR 97309-1215

1730 Commercial St. S
Salem, OR 9730

6401 SE Foster Rd
Portland, OR 9720

1.800.452.214
www.seiu503.org